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Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

Environment and sustainable development

Letter dated 10 July 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the Abu Dhabi Declaration on Agricultural Development and Desertification Control adopted by the General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development at its twenty-seventh session, held in Abu Dhabi from 28 to 30 April 2002. I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 88 and 89 of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Mohammed Rashid **Al-Absi**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 10 July 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

League of Arab States
Arab Organization for Agricultural Development
General Assembly

Twenty-seventh session
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 28-30 April 2002

Resolution 22
Abu Dhabi Declaration on Agricultural Development and Desertification Control

The General Assembly,

Having discussed and agreed upon the measures and arrangements necessary for the coordination of Arab efforts to achieve sustainable agricultural development and counteract the desertification that has become widespread in the Arab countries and that poses a threat to natural resources and thus to Arab food security,

Adopts the Abu Dhabi Declaration on Agricultural Development and Desertification Control annexed to this resolution.

Annex

We, the ministers of agriculture and officials responsible for agricultural matters in the Arab States,

Meeting at the twenty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, from 28 to 30 April 2002 under the generous patronage of the Head of State, His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, whose exalted guidance and momentous achievements have been highly instrumental in the development of the agricultural sector at the local and regional levels, inasmuch as huge land reclamation and water supply projects have helped to increase areas under cultivation and combat desertification in many Arab countries,

Having considered the results of the studies, national programmes and projects undertaken to promote agricultural development and curb desertification,

Seeking to instil the concept of sustainable agriculture with a view to protecting and safeguarding natural resources and thus ensuring the future of generations yet to come,

And affirming the importance of close cooperation and coordination among the Arab States,

Have agreed to adopt this:

Abu Dhabi Declaration on Agricultural Development and Desertification Control

Aware of the natural challenges confronting the agricultural sector in the Arab world in seeking to achieve food security in a sustainable manner that preserves fertile areas, water and biological diversity,

Also aware that striking a balance between agricultural development and the preservation of natural resources is one of the most important requirements of sustainable development,

Noting that present methods of water and land resource utilization threaten to deplete them, weaken their regenerative capacity and impair their quality,

Expressing appreciation for the efforts being made at the inter-Arab and regional levels to achieve sustainable agricultural development such as will ensure a life of dignity for Arab citizens and promote the principle of participation in development,

Noting with concern the instability, insecurity and absence of peace in some Arab countries, and primarily in the State of Palestine, which has an adverse impact on their potential to achieve sustainable development and control desertification,

Urging the importance of dispatch in the implementation of the provisions of the international agreements on desertification control, biological diversity and climate change,

We accordingly declare that we are committed to taking measures and adopting mechanisms to promote the achievement of agricultural development and desertification control in the Arab world, including:

1. Coordination of efforts to stimulate joint Arab action to mobilize capacities and secure the appropriate technical, legislative and institutional environment;

2. Action to develop the Arab productive agricultural sectors and their associated industries; and pursuit of policies and programmes to rationalize the exploitation of natural resources — land, water and the environment — and increase the efficiency of their utilization;

3. Coming to grips with the manifestations of and reasons for the degradation of natural resources by introducing policies and controls to end faulty practices in agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries;

4. Coordination and cooperation in the elaboration and implementation of national, subregional and regional plans; and taking advantage of the financial resources and mechanisms made available by international agreements and resolutions for sustainable development and desertification control;

5. Capacity-building for and greater attention to all agricultural and environmental specializations relevant to issues of sustainable agricultural development and desertification control;

6. Expansion of media advocacy campaigns and development of educational programmes to instil awareness and increase knowledge and understanding of agricultural development issues from the perspective of the sustainability of natural resources;

7. Strengthening of and support for Arab research institutions; and encouragement of innovation in the transfer of new agricultural techniques to counter desertification;

8. Affirmation of the principle of participation; encouragement of investment in agricultural development programmes and projects; and enhancement of the role of non-governmental organizations in these fields;

9. Coordination of positions on issues to be addressed at the forthcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development; and utilization of the opportunities to which the Summit will give rise to promote sustainable agricultural development and combat desertification in the Arab world;

10. Encouragement of joint Arab investment in agricultural development projects to promote the optimum exploitation of Arab agricultural resources while achieving sustainability;

11. Affirmation of the importance of the coordination of Arab positions on the issues relevant to sustainable development that are embodied in the policies of the World Trade Organization in order to protect Arab interests, ensure Arab food security and confront any food embargo imposed on the Arab States.

In affirming our support and backing for the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development as the Arab institution entrusted with the task of achieving sustainable agricultural development and coordinating efforts for Arab agricultural integration with a view to achieving Arab food security and water security, we hereby call upon national, regional and international institutions and organizations to support the Organization's endeavours.

God it is who bestows success.